

YOUNG FOLKS' COLUMN.

HOW JAPANESE CHILDREN PLAY AT BLINDMAN'S BUFF.

A Small Boy Gives Expression to Opinions Concerning the Cat—A Short Story About a Little Girl, a Donkey and a Turkey.

A little girl, 7 years of age, tells the following adventure in St. Nicholas: I went with my parents to a nice farm house to spend Thanksgiving. We arrived two days before Thanksgiving. I had great fun and learned to ride a pretty little donkey. He was named Saffo, and he was so gentle that he would let you pull his ears. The farmer was a kind man, and I asked him if he was going to get a turkey for Thanksgiving dinner. He said: "Now, I'll tell you what I'll do. If you will take Saffo and ride over the bridge to the barn yard, and count the turkeys you see there, I'll give you one for Thanksgiving, but you must count every turkey there is."



"HE WOULDN'T LET US PASS HIM AT ALL." So papa put me on Saffo and I started to count the turkeys in the barn yard. I knew how to count up as high as 100. But when we came to the bridge Saffo and I got such a fright. A monstrous bird, making more noise than he could, came running to meet us, and he stopped right on the bridge, as mad as he could be, and his tail and all his feathers stuck out, and he wouldn't let us pass him at all. He was awful. So we had to turn back and gallop as fast as we could. I knew what he was, because his noise sounded like "gobble, gobble, gobble!"

Well, the farmer would have laughed at us for being afraid to cross the bridge to the barn yard, so I told him I only counted one, and he didn't mind about having turkey for Thanksgiving. But he said he would see about it. And what do you think? We did have one, all the same, when the day came, and doughnuts and mince pie afterward.

I was sorry for any poor bird to be roasted; but I think that turkeys are a great deal too fierce when they are not cooked.

Blind Man's Buff in Japan.

Some of the Japanese games are quite original, others are astonishingly like our own. In a recent number of Wide Awake appeared the following description of blind man's buff, as played by some Japanese children.



JAPANESE CHILDREN AT PLAY.

The five Japanese boys playing blind man's buff are named, beginning with the little fellow near the tree, Totsan, Kin, Yato, Kats and Metz. Totsan is not more than 6 years old, as shown by the cut of his hair, similar to that of Yato and Kats. He is dressed in a nice little silk komono, or gown, of checked blue and black, lined with red silk and girded in with a sash or obi of red silk. Kin is at least 7 years old, for he has two little pig-tails on his head. His komono is either tucked up or he has been laid aside. His silk dress is red, figured in white, and lined with deep blue. On his feet are pretty straw sandals held on by a soft band passing between the great toe and the next, and across the foot. Yato's flowing silk robe, checked in black and white and lined with crimson, has just been laid hold upon by the tiny claws of Kats the "blind man." The oldest boy is Metz; his tonsure shows him to be over 8. He is trying to divert Kats from Yato by clapping his hands; but probably in one minute Yato will have the kerchief over his eyes. Metz has the finest dress of all; it is of lilac silk with white flowers embroidered on it, and lined with figured silk in scarlet and gold.

Composition About a Cat.

Following is the composition written by a small boy on the cat:

The cat is a curious animal; it has four feet and also four legs. Its head is at one end of its body, and its tail is at the other. When it walks its head goes before and its tail follows along behind. Its front feet walk before and its hind feet walk along behind. It is not good for a cat to tie a bunch of firecrackers to its tail. Cats can climb trees; dogs can't. That is lucky for cats. When a dog gets after them they can climb a tree, where they can sass back without getting hurt. You can't hit a cat. Once I threw a boot and I hit an old rooster. The old rooster he died, but the cat didn't.

A Classical Riddle.

"What is that animal which walks on four legs in the morning, on two legs at noon and on three legs in the evening?"

This is the famous classical riddle which the sphinx is said to have propounded in olden times, devoting those who failed to solve the problem. Following is the answer: "Man. In the morning of life the child crawls on all fours; later, he walks erect; and in the evening of life, he supports his tottering steps with a staff."

Origin of a Common Expression.

The common expression "Mind your p's and q's," had its origin in the ale houses in the olden time, when it was customary to keep each man's account upon the wall or door. At the head of the bill would be the initials P and Q, which stood for pints and quarts, and as the numbers mounted up, we can imagine one kindly rustic saying to another, "Mind your p's and q's, man; mind your p's and q's."

The latest carriage wraps are a graceful combination of dolman and paletot trimmed with the soft fluffy furs of fashion.

THE CURIOSITY SHOP.

The Irish Kings—A Number of Sovereigns Preceded the Conquest.

The history of Ireland, prior to the Saxon conquest, is like that of Great Britain before the Roman conquest—without historical or trustworthy data. There is not a genuine chronicle of any kind and hardly a tradition. Writers for revenue only have invented a thousand most ingenious and plausible fairy stories, crediting them to "tradition," not only carrying the list of kings in unbroken succession back to the flood, but making the island the original Garden of Eden and the center from which all law and civilization spread throughout the world after the deluge and down to Strongbow. According to the most careful and dispassionate research there is nothing to show that one king ever held sole and undisputed sway over all Ireland, or that the people were sufficiently organized for such a government. Four (and perhaps seven) kings preceding the conquest were recognized titularly or claimed the title, but the sovereignty was such as the sultan exercised over Morocco or Bulgaria or the pope over Europe—a mere matter of form, a shadow without much substance.

Facts About the Bible.

The number of letters in the Bible is 3,586,489; words, 773,692; verses, 31,173; chapters, 1,180; books, 66. The longest book in the Old Testament is Psalms, it having 150 chapters; the shortest is Obadiah, it having but one chapter of only twenty-one verses. The longest books in the New Testament are Matthew and the Acts, each of which consists of twenty-eight chapters, although Luke contains more verses and words. Third John is the shortest, containing one chapter of four-teen verses and 253 words. The longest chapter in the Old Testament is the 119th Psalm, which contains 176 verses. The shortest chapter is the 117th Psalm, it contains but two verses. The longest chapter in the New Testament is the first chapter of Luke, it contains eighty verses; the shortest is I John, first chapter, it contains ten verses. The longest verse in the Old Testament is the ninth verse of the eighth chapter of Esther, it contains ninety words composed of 426 letters; the shortest verse is the twenty-fifth verse of the first chapter of I Chronicles, consisting of twelve letters and three words. The middle verse is the eighth verse of the 118th Psalm. The nineteenth chapter of II Kings and thirty-seventh chapter of Isaiah read alike. The 8th, 15th, 21st and 31st verses of the 103rd Psalm are alike. The book of Job is the oldest book in the Bible, and the 21st verse of the 7th chapter of Ezra contains all the letters of the alphabet with the exception of "j." The 55th verse, 11th chapter, of St. John, is the shortest in the Bible.

Rag, Tag and Bobtail.

This is probably an old hunting expression to signify a herd of deer. In Prescott's "Philip the Second," quoted by Strype and Hollingshead, is the following: "They hunted the deer, and were so greedy of their destruction that they killed them rag and tag, with hands and swords." The word rag, or tag, signifies, according to Bailey, "a doe in the second year of her age." Rag is defined by the same writer as "a herd of young colts," but older authors have rag to signify a herd of deer at rutting time. Bobtail means a fawn just after it has been weaned. Tag and bobtail are used in the same sense when speaking of sheep, but rag does not seem to be known in this connection. The complete original sense of the phrase "rag and bobtail" seems to have been a collection of sheep or deer, of all sorts mixed indiscriminately.

A Long Road That Has Many Turns.

The Union Pacific railroad, proper, extends from Council Bluffs, Ia., to Ogden, U. T. It has a length (with its branches) of 1,831.9 miles. The longest main or trunk line in the world is that of the Canadian Pacific, from Quebec to Fort Moody, a distance of 3,625 miles. Counting its branches it is 3,994 miles in length. The Union Pacific railroad company controls 5,627 miles of railroad, the greatest length of line under the control of one company. The Northern Pacific, from Superior, Wis., to Wallula Junction, W. T., is 1,674 miles long. The Chicago and Northwestern owns and operates 3,765.25 miles.

The Purchase of Oregon.

The entire region west of the Rocky mountains, extending north from Mexico to the British possessions, and bounded on the east by the Louisiana purchase, was long known as Oregon. It was ceded to the United States by Spain in 1819, a clause in the treaty ceding Florida, relinquishing all her "rights, claims and pretensions" to such territory. The dispute between the United States and Great Britain concerning the northern boundary of Oregon came near resulting in a war. Many of the school maps are wrong. The Louisiana purchase was bounded on the west by the Rockies.

How Presidential Electors are Chosen.

Up to 1823 all presidential electors were appointed. From 1824 to 1833, some were appointed and others chosen by the people. Omitting the election of 1864, when electors were not chosen in eleven states, the first election at which all the electors were voted for by the people was in 1872. In 1876 the old rule obtained, and the election of 1880 was the second time. The last election (1884) was the third time. The Colorado electors were not voted for by the people in 1876, nor the Florida electors in 1868.

The Weight of Hearts.

The average weight of men's hearts is eleven ounces each, and of women's only nine ounces. Thus when they give and talk, or exchange hearts, man is the loser, quality being equal. Man's average brain weighs 49½ ounces and woman's 44. The average weight of both lungs is for men 45 ounces and for women 32 ounces. Garfield's right lung weighed 32 and the left 27 ounces, making 59 ounces of lungs, or 14 ounces in excess of the average.

Chinese Population.

The only census ever made in China was in 1812. According to the Almanach de Gotha for 1880 the population of China, properly so called, was estimated at 405,000,000, and of the rest of the empire, including Manchuria, Mongolia, Tibet and Corea, 28,000,000—It all 433,000,000. It is a matter of guesswork whether we understand that an official census is being taken now.

Lead Pencil Signature.

A signature in lead pencil is perfectly valid and no man can cheat his creditor by pleading that he has signed his name with a lead pencil. But no creditor is compelled to receive a note signed with a lead pencil. A bank may make any rules in this matter that it pleases.

Old Coaches.

Coaches were introduced into England about 1511, and forty years later there were but three in use in Paris, they having been introduced into the French capital in 1524.

Length of Atlantic Cables.

The Atlantic cables vary in length from 2,099 to over 3,000 miles, according to the distance between connecting stations.

ALL AROUND THE HOUSE.

Novelties in Fine Glass—New England Brown Bread and Baked Beans.

Something quite new in glass is a fruit stand for the center of the table. Home Decoration describes it as of porcelain finish and a delicate pale pink in color. It consists of a round flat dish, fluted, out of the center of which springs a column, supporting a similar dish, rather smaller, surmounted by a fairy lamp. Four single flat dishes, fluted, each supporting a fairy lamp, with pink shade, belong to this set.

Novelties in cut glass are dessert sets of four oval dishes, strawberry diamond cutting, each dish set in a frame work of silver delicately wrought. The framework consists of a narrow chased rim, on which the bottom of the dish rests, elevated by four griffins' feet, with hands curving outward to the upper edge of the dish, and ending there in griffins' heads. The open mouths hold silver chains of exquisite workmanship, which hang in festoons from one head to the other.

Two Genuine New England Dishes.

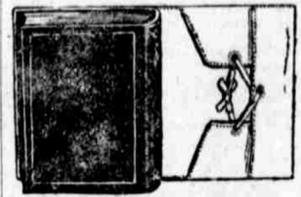
A New England housewife pronounces Mrs. Cleveland's brown bread recipe to be undoubtedly very nice, but not the article Yankees demand, and she proceeds to give the following genuine New England recipe: In the first place, brown bread, like cake, is much more tender and exceedingly lighter when stirred with a knife instead of a spoon. A broad bladed knife is the better. And to be thoroughly enjoyed, brown bread must be accompanied with brown baked beans.

Brown Bread—One quart of corn meal, one pint of rye meal, one quart of sweet milk, one teaspoonful of soda, one teaspoonful of salt, one coffee cup full of molasses. Mix the corn and rye meal thoroughly together, add the milk and salt, stir the soda into the molasses until it foams, then stir all together with a knife. Put the mixture into a regular brown bread dish, being careful to grease the dish well. Steam at least nine hours, then bake in a moderately heated oven one hour.

Baked Beans—Soak one quart of medium sized white beans in lukewarm water over night. In the morning boil them until the outer skin cracks, then drain them and rinse thoroughly in cold water. Put them in a regular bean pot; wash and scrape one pound of salt pork; cut the rind into squares and place on top of the beans. Add one teaspoonful of salt, half a teaspoonful of soda, and cover the whole with cold water. Bake nine hours in a moderately heated oven.

A Convenient Book Cover.

It is often desirable to preserve handsomely bound books from the moisture of the hands while being read, and the adjustable cover shown in the cut is designed for this purpose.



ADJUSTABLE BOOK COVER.

A piece of velvet or satin is cut the required size. The edges are neatly and tightly turned and cut, and are feather stitched or sewed by machine, as suits the fancy; eyelet holes are made and a ribbon passed through and tied to the cover in position. On the outside of the cover may be worked imitation of hinges in cross stitch, and in the middle of the upper side a monogram. A cover made after this design is adjustable to many sizes of books. Gray linen covers of the same style will be found very suitable for children's books.

To Keep a Glossy Oilcloth.

Never use soap in the water when washing oilcloth. It fades the colors and breaks up the paint. Ammonia also gives the cloth a dull, dead look. Good Housekeeping directs as follows: Take a clean flannel cloth and apply clean, warm water, which is finally to be removed by soaking it up into the washing cloth again, after it has been wrung out. The oilcloth is then wiped dry with another piece of clean flannel or coarse crash. After the oilcloth has become thoroughly dry apply to it some warm linseed oil. The housekeeper who tries this for the first time will probably use too much, and make the cloth so sticky that every particle of dust will adhere to it. Only a very little is to be used, and slightly rubbed into the cloth, giving it a handsome gloss. The linseed oil will do more harm than good, unless used as sparingly as indicated. In the country skim milk is used in place of oil, and it gives the cloth a beautiful gloss.

Plush Covered Bracket.

Nothing shows off a handsome piece of china or bisque to better advantage than a background of rich, dark plush. Therefore the following is a very good way to display treasures of this kind: Have made a bracket of common pine wood three-eighths thick, in separate pieces—back, shelf and shelf bracket. Let it be perfectly plain, but of graceful outline, with the shelf set low enough so that the back of the bracket will project above the object or objects to be placed on the shelf. This bracket is to be covered with fine plush. But before covering put the different parts of the bracket together with screws. Then take them apart and cover each with plush, after which they can easily be put together again.

Sponge Cake Good a Week Old.

Beat four eggs all together till very light. Add two cups of sugar; beat well; add slowly two-thirds of a cup of boiling water, two and one-half cups of flour, two teaspoonfuls of baking powder, a little salt and extract. The boiling water makes it moist and tender. Bake in a sheet one-half hour by a slow fire. If wrapped in a cloth it will be better the third day than the first. Another thing in its favor is, it is so easily made.

How to Bake Fruit Cakes.

The whole secret of making fruit cakes, says Catherine Owen, lies in the baking. The oven must be very slow (220 degs. by the thermometer). They must not be shaken, but turned very gently, and, when taken from the oven, allowed to remain till cool before they are removed from the pan.

A Good Way to Cook Squash.

Cut a small Hubbard squash in five or six pieces, remove the seeds and wash. Put into a dripping pan with just enough water to keep from burning and bake till tender. Remove from the shell, mash fine, season with butter, pepper and salt; add one teaspoonful of sweet milk. Serve hot.

Flattening in Interior Decoration.

"Flattening" or painting in flat color is favored by decorators for inside work. This consists in replacing the greater part of the oil generally used with spirits of turpentine. Only as much oil as is needed to bind the paint and fix it on the ground—a third or fourth part—is used.

Ranson Carbon Light.



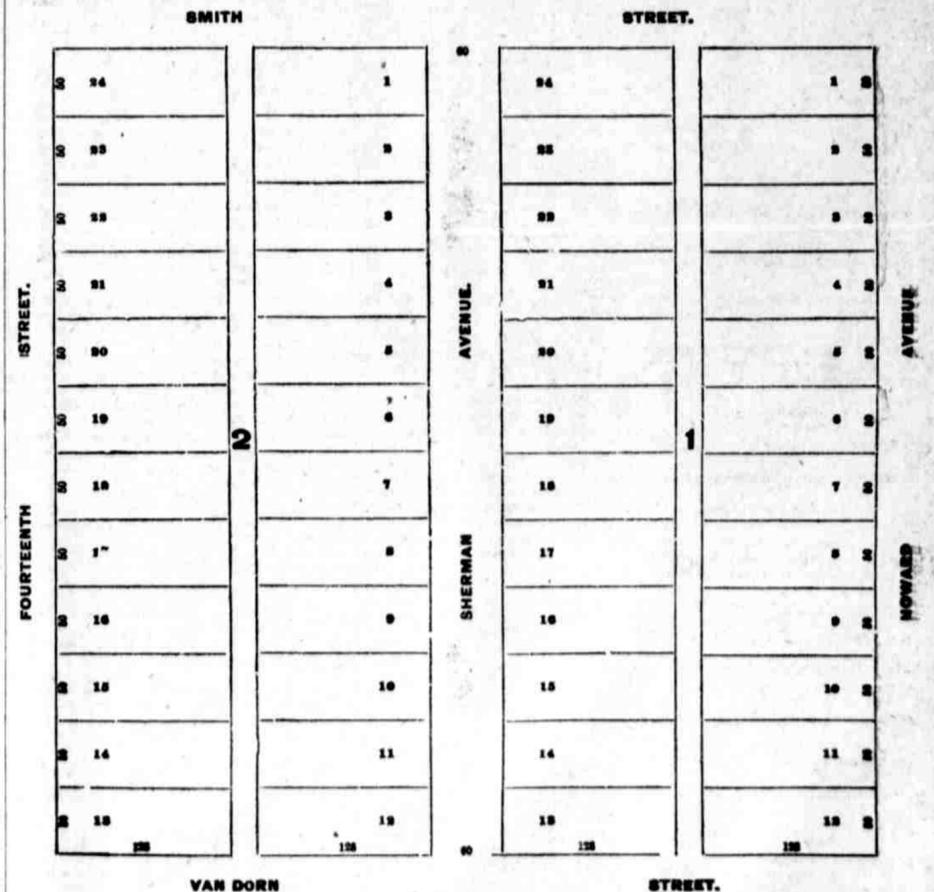
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KNOB HILL.

Scale, 100 Ft.=1 Inch.



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